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ABSTRACT

This special serial issue is based on the proceedings of an invitational conference on "Next Steps in Inner-City Education" held in Racine (Wisconsin) in October 1995. The three articles in this publication attempt to offer effective and practical recommendations for educational practitioners and policy makers who seek to transform the country's educational institutions. All three articles stress that the problems of education and learning in urban schools are urgent, and that there is a substantial knowledge base that can be used to improve the U.S. capacity for education in urban communities. The first article, "Support Systems for Children, Youth, Families, and Schools in Inner-City Situations" by Sharon L. Kagan, emphasizes that structural, organizational, and pedagogical reforms are needed to achieve the sweeping changes needed for improved urban education. "Why What Works Doesn't in Teacher Education" by Mark A. Smylie and Joseph Kahne notes that research can inform and support the work of teachers in many diverse ways. It may be more difficult to apply research to inner-city schools, but the effort must be made. The third article, "Using Performance Incentives To Improve the Outcomes of Disadvantaged Students" by Eric A. Hanushek advocates performance incentives to bring about educational improvement in the cities. The Federal government and businesses must participate in efforts for improvement. Properly designed performance incentives may encourage the ingenuity needed to develop effective programs for advantaged and disadvantaged students. (SLD)

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The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities

Developing Strategies for Improving Education in the Inner Cities

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The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities

The CEIC
REVIEW

A catalyst for merging research, policy, and practice.

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Developing Strategies for Improving Education in the Inner Cities

By Margaret C. Wang, Professor and Director, The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities at Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education

As we approach a new millennium, the United States is experiencing marked transformations in a variety of its most critical institutions; indeed, the very face of the nation is undergoing radical change. At least in the popular conception, what was once a land of secure jobs, effective laws, and safe communities is rapidly becoming defined by the homeless, the jobless, and the lawless. This is particularly true in our nation's inner cities, where rates of poverty, crime, and unemployment far exceed those in suburban and rural areas. In addition, the social services that exist to relieve these conditions are staggering from the withdrawal of city, state, and federal funding.

In the end, schools are the hardest hit. Their students are often woefully unprepared, lacking basic necessities, such as good nutrition, quality medical care, and safe transportation, as well as adequate academic preparation. Urban schools in their current form are clearly unable to withstand the social forces that batter them; even if they could survive, survival would no longer suffice. In order for our nation and its cities to remain vital, schools must not only anticipate the changes to come, but also lead the course forward. If they don't, the current generation of children and youth living in urban areas will be consigned to lives of academic, economic, and social marginalization. In short, they will suffer from our present lack of foresight.

Of course, making general statements about the severity of urban problems, such as widespread academic failure, is relatively easy. Offering feasible, practical, affordable ways to curb or prevent these problems is more challenging, and is where the real work lies. The question remains, then: how are our nation's urban schools to be transformed into effective, nurturing learning environments that serve the needs of families and communities and prepare children and youth for future academic and life success?

The three articles included in this special issue of The CEIC *Review* attempt to provide specific answers to this question by offering effective, practical next-step recommendations for educational practitioners and policymakers who seek to transform our nation's educational institutions. Although each author focuses on different aspects relating to urban education and educational reform, all share two basic assumptions: (a) the problems of education and learning in urban schools are extremely urgent; and (b) there is a substantial knowledge base that can be culled to improve this nation's capacity for education in urban communities, where the life situations of so many children and youth are impaired by poverty and neglect, and where many have little margin of safety. In addition, each article contains specific proposals for policy development and future research and development agendas.

This special issue of The CEIC *Review* is based on the proceedings from an invitational conference on "Next Steps in Inner-City Education," held at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin in October 1995. The conference, which was cosponsored by the National Center on Education in the Inner Cities and the Johnson Foundation, brought together a wide range of disciplines and perspectives to examine the current research base and present practice, and to develop next-step prospects to significantly improve development and learning of children and youth in urban America. ■

The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities is a unit in The Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education, an interdisciplinary center devoted to the study of the developmental and educational problems faced by children, youth, and their families. All inquiries about the work of the Center should be sent to the Information Services Coordinator, CRHDE, Temple University, 1301 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19122-6091.

Support Systems for Children, Youth, Families, and Schools in Inner-City Situtations

by Sharon L. Kagan, Senior Associate, The Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy, Yale University

Access to knowledge and the pursuit of equal rights have long been two of this nation's most laudable goals. Given this historic commitment, why now is there such concern that children and youth, in particular those in our nation's inner cities, are being short-changed on both fronts? And why is there such urgency to re-examine these issues?

In no small measure, such concerns have emerged because so many of our nation's social institutions are simultaneously in a state of flux. This is particularly true of the American family, which has altered rapidly over the past three decades in both its structure and behavior. In contrast to eras past, soaring numbers of divorced adults, reconstituted families, single-parent households, and working mothers now frame the contemporary social landscape. To make matters worse, social service agencies are no longer able to adequately mitigate these massive changes. These agencies are currently facing their own critical problems, including inadequate funding, personnel shortages, service delivery fragmentation, and costly, overburdened bureaucracies.

To better serve the needs of families and their children, many practitioners and theorists are calling for vast reform in the human services. Similarly, formal and informal educational institutions are undergoing their own massive reform efforts in response to concerns about increases in drop-out rates, the readiness of American students for employment in a global economy, and growing disparities in the accomplishments of the rich and poor.

Learning, however, is not the private purview of schools. There are other community-based organizations that are engaged in promoting learning and social equity. Among them are youth-serving organizations that have been and continue to be successful in attracting and maintaining the interests of young people by providing them with education and support not accessible through schools. In addition, a growing number of private, nonprofit organizations that support families and their children form a significant component of the community service structure by augmenting the work of more formal institutions. Among these institutions are social clubs, member cooperatives, business groups, and religions organizations, which serve the health, education, and social welfare needs of their members.

Redirecting Structures for Learning

Early in our nation's history, the household, school, and church all were included in the education of children and youth. Today, however, schools serve as the center of the learning industry. In assuming this role, schools have had to specialize in a brand of learning that features cognitive attainment and have promoted specific processes of and places for learning. Education that transcends the classroom and occurs after school or in the home is largely ignored.

Learning is not the private purview of schools. There are other community-based organizations that are engaged in promoting learning and social equity.

Despite this emphasis on formal learning, schools have repeatedly been asked to serve as instruments of social change by taking on more and different responsibilities, such as providing meals, medical and dental inspections, home visitations, vocational guidance, and services for wayward youths. Toward this end, community schools, which were established in the 1930s and rose to prominence in the 1950s, focused their efforts on serving the community and developing community resources as part of the educational enterprise. Such commitment to expanding the definition and services associated with schools was reaffirmed during the 1960s, with educational reform efforts that focused on supporting families, and not simply the children in them. More recent research indicates that, despite some resistance to change, efforts to foster structural reform while broadening both the role and agenda of schools have made significant headway. In recent years, schools have begun to deliver more social and health services, and have aimed to achieve greater access for all students, as well as more highly sustained attendance.

Closely aligned with schools, a series of school-linked/service integration initiatives also have sought to make many community institutions responsive to the learning and development of children and families. School-linked services seek to improve the educational performance and well-being of both at-risk students and nonrisk populations by streamlining services in order to maximize access and efficiency. Service integration initiatives complement school-linked reform by seeking ways to restructure human and community services so that real community linkages that durably bind schools with other service organizations can be fostered. Both school-linked and service integration efforts indicate that schools and communities recognize that the responsibility for learning transcends formal school boundaries to include a host of institutions and organizations that perform an educative function in concert with one another.

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In addition to these services, family support efforts, emanating from such diverse fields as health, education, welfare, prison reform, community development, and social work, act as informal providers of services, and work to reform the ways in which human services are conceptualized and delivered with a strong commitment to building family strengths, prevention, diversity, and peer support. Schools have been particularly influenced by family support efforts, implementing many of the movement's basic principles and creating family support centers in their facilities. In addition, many school districts and state departments of education have fostered the establishment of additional school- and community-based family support programs.

Lessons from Educational and Related Service Delivery Reforms

With the multitude of efforts to reform services for children, what have we learned that can be used to achieve better results? At present, there is an abundance of information that can be used to provide clues to, rather than definitive answers for, the effects of systems efforts. The process for establishing support systems, for example, has been shown to be time-consuming and laborious, somewhat imprecisely conceived, and subject to contextual variables that often are not in control of program developers or implementers. Outcomes research is somewhat less definitive and indicates that when efforts encourage parental support, results are achieved in physical and behavioral domains, such as teen pregnancy prevention and smoking reduction. In addition, research shows that integrated services produce outcomes in such areas such as increased attendance, achievement, and self-esteem, while reducing behavioral problems and dropout rates. These accounts, and many like them, suggest that systems efforts are difficult to evaluate not only because of their internal properties (e.g., design inconsistencies, participant variation, treatment variation), but also because of critical external factors, such as changes in the nature and level of support programs receive.

Much is happening structurally to realign learning and support services for children and families. Opportunities are being developed in and outside of schools, with new community institutions linking with schools to provide services. Family support programs are being created across the country to intervene before problems arise and to support contemporary families as they navigate life's responsibilities. Mainstream bureaucratic organizations are reforming themselves to be more accommodating, supportive, and efficient. Schools also are paying more attention to pedagogy and instructional practices, working with a greater number of agencies and services, and refocusing their efforts on collaborative decisionmaking that accords more power to staff and parents.

Despite the growing national zeitgeist for constructive reform, however, problems still exist. We live in an era that fosters deep and enduring tensions between rich and poor, urban and suburban, black and white. Today's children, growing numbers of them living in poverty, are at risk of not becoming contributing members of society, reflective adults, or individuals capable of sustaining personal and employment responsibilities. Despite pedagogical reform, the current education system is depersonalized, and quells inspiration and creativity in students. It is toward change in the attitudinal and spiritual conditions that characterize and dissuade the American public from expanding its commitments to nurture and protect all youngsters that we must turn.

Creating Support Systems for Children and Families

A focus on attitudinal reform is necessary, but not sufficient to achieve the kind of sweeping change of thinking needed. Structural, organizational, and pedagogical reform must be sustained before attitudinal change can take place in order to produce improved services and outcomes for children in the short-term and to serve as fodder for skeptics in the long-term. Several strategies for achieving these reforms are discussed below.

• Most reforms are designed, developed, and implemented from the perspective of a single institution (i.e., the school or social service agency), or

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Why What Works Doesn't in Teacher Education

by Mark A. Smylie, Associate Professor of Policy Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Joseph Kahne, Assistant Professor of Policy Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago

The argument seems simple enough: inadequate teacher education is one source of inner-city schooling problems. New teachers often leave their preservice education programs unprepared to work effectively with low-achieving students and students of poverty and/or color. This lack of preparation manifests itself in poor instruction and low academic performance among students. Furthermore, new teachers in inner-city schools often report high levels of stress, and many ultimately defect from their urban classrooms. Some abandon teaching altogether. The irony of it all, the argument goes, is that substantial knowledge from research exists that, if applied, could help enhance the effectiveness of teachers and improve the learning opportunities of inner-city students. Thus, this knowledge should be incorporated to a greater extent in teacher preparation programs and conveyed more systematically to preservice teachers.

Of course, bringing research knowledge to practice through teacher education is not quite so simple. Teacher education has traditionally been the subject of recurrent investigation and reform, and continues to remain an enterprise largely characterized by poorly conceived collages of courses, lack of a clear mission (beyond entitling its graduates to state credentials), and a concentration on developing specific, discrete skills and techniques. These problems, however, have more recently been accompanied by a simultaneous explosion of scholarly research on teaching and children's learning and development that many observers argue can and should inform the content of teacher education. At the same time, there has been substantial development in knowledge from research on adult learning, college student learning, and learning to teach that might inform the organization and implementation of teacher education programs. While still largely encapsulated in the scholarly literature, this knowledge is beginning to be codified in ways that make it more readily accessible to preservice and inservice teachers, as well as teacher educators.

If knowledge from scholarly research that might improve the practice of teaching is expanding and becoming more accessible, why isn't it being sufficiently assimilated in the preservice education of teachers, especially those in this nation's inner cities? Answers to this question can be found, at least in part, by looking at (a) demands from the field and the expectations of preservice teachers; (b) teacher educators and teacher education programs; and (c) the development, characteristics, and applications of the research knowledge base. In turn, examining these differing perspectives allows us to begin to develop a strategic plan to effectively bridge the gap between research and practice in teacher education.

Demands from the Field and Preservice Teacher Expectations

There is a prevailing conception among practicing teachers that a person best learns how to teach through experience. Because of this commonly-held perception, demands for knowledge from the field tend to be heavily focused on the practical and are judged by classroom experience. These demands are more specifically oriented toward the particular contexts of individual teachers. Teachers express a need for idiosyncratic knowledge that is applicable to a specific classroom context, relates to particular students, and addresses specific instructional needs. Knowledge developed in new contexts is often suspect and often dismissed as irrelevant. What many teachers want is knowledge that complements existing orientations and contexts and requires little time and energy to understand and deploy.

These demands from the field are largely reflected in the low expectations that preservice teacher education students maintain for their preservice preparation programs. These expectations are grounded not only in their assumption that teaching is best learned on the job, but also in their perceptions of what is necessary to do that job well. The expectations of teacher education students for their preservice preparation focus primarily on acquiring as many specific solutions and techniques as possible to be used when facing future classroom challenges. Students also place little value on employing new understandings or intellectual insights in the classroom, primarily because they perceive a lack of need or opportunity to do so once on the job. The low expectations of teacher education students, coupled with demands for practical know-how from the field, provide little impetus for the inclusion of more theory and research in preservice preparation programs.

Teacher Educators and Teacher Education Programs

In many ways, the relationship of research to practice for teacher educators reflects the experience of teachers. Substantial disjunction exists between teacher education faculty and knowledge from research, with teacher education faculty generally contributing little to the production of scholarly inquiry. There are several possible reasons for this. First, many teacher educators are not researchers, but rather former teachers or other school personnel who have not been trained to conduct research and are not socialized according to higher education's norms of scholarship. Second, teacher educators' workload and responsibili-

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ties are rarely conducive to research production, since many must spend their time teaching and supervising preservice students, and developing working relationships with schools and veteran teachers. In addition, teacher education programs, like most other professional preparation programs, often assume a low-status position in many higher education institutions, thereby lowering expectations for research production.

These perspectives hold clear implications for the design and implementation of preservice programs, and result in a lack of interest and commitment among teacher educators to incorporate a substantial amount of theory and research into their programs. Studies of teacher education curricula reveal that technique and practical experience have come to dominate all else in the curriculum, while theoretical and research knowledge is presented in isolation. Ironically, teacher education continues to suffer the reputation among practicing teachers of being too theoretical and not sufficiently practical. These perceptions underscore the magnitude of the problem of connecting research with theory in teacher education.

The Research Knowledge Base

The predilections of preservice and practicing teachers aside, it is often difficult to draw interpretations and applications from educational research that impact succinctly on practice. The limited practical significance of social science research is widely acknowledged in social and educational policy development. Indeed, researchers themselves often disagree about the meanings of findings and how they inform practice. In addition, the phenomena that educational researchers seek to understand involve tremendous entanglements, complexities, and ambiguities that complicate interpretation and make it difficult to derive predictable rules of practice that apply to the dynamic, changing system of the classroom.

The problems of interpretation and application stem in large part from fundamental differences between the goals and orientations of the researcher and those of the educational practitioner. Practitioners, in this case practicing and preservice teachers and teacher educators, are oriented mainly toward action and the achievement of particular, valued, instrumental outcomes. Researchers, however, are primarily oriented toward definition, description, and prediction. They seek to find new problems, to discover new ways to frame old problems, or to examine broad relationships among phenomena. Sometimes they do not aim to inform practice directly. Their consideration of these issues is primarily to make psychological, sociological, or other disciplinary advances rather than to respond to practitioners' priorities.

Even when researchers focus on real-world problems and applied issues, however, difficulties remain in drawing implications and applications. Researchers and practitioners rarely ask the same questions about education. Researchers' questions are derived from their outside or macro perspective, in stark contrast to practitioners' day-to-day, micro view of teaching and learning. Researchers also can fall prey to "hot" topics generated within the research community or the policy community, neither of which is necessarily cognizant of what is most immediate and relevant to teachers or teacher educators.

Bridging Research and Practice in Teacher Education

Prior to developing an effective plan of action to address the gap between research and practice in teacher education, we need to recognize that the diverse needs, values, and abilities of teachers and students, as well as the barriers to and opportunities for changing instructional settings, limit the potential for research to provide useful, generalizable procedures. It is also worth remembering that if good teaching is a dynamic and interactive activity, it makes little sense to establish rules of research findings and transfer them into practice through teacher education. While research is unlikely to provide authoritative, final solutions to the specific challenges faced by practitioners, it can both inform and support the education and work of teachers in many, diverse ways. Research can provide "evidence and argument" even though it frequently fails to offer "fact or proof." It can help teachers identify, conceptualize, and reconceptualize problems, activities, and outcomes related to teaching and learning; provide verification of existing ideas; make discoveries; complicate as well as simplify thinking; and challenge conventional thought and practice. Scholarly research can also provide common language and theoretical frameworks that can be used by teachers to jointly discuss, analyze, and explain particular events and phenomena.

While research is unlikely to provide authoritative, final solutions to the specific challenges faced by practitioners, it can both inform and support the education and work of teachers in many diverse ways.

At present, a host of new strategies for teacher education at both the preservice and inservice levels are attempting to engage research in this manner. These strategies include, but are not limited to, teacher-researcher collaboratives and networks, action research or teacher research, multipartisan practitioner-scholar research consortia, and professional development schools. These strategies

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Using Performance Incentives to Improve the Outcomes of Disadvantaged Students

by Eric A. Hanushek, Director of the W. Allen Wallis Institute of Political Economy, University of Rochester

There is ample evidence that the changes that have been implemented in school reform over the past 30 years have tended to increase costs without commensurate improvements in student performance. Although school expenditures per student almost tripled between 1960 and 1990, student performance has remained constant at best, and may even have fallen. These rapid increases in school expenditures have also failed to eliminate, or even greatly reduce, the longstanding performance gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Indeed, the current inefficiencies of schooling, with too much spent and too little achieved, is particularly troubling for the educational reform of disadvantaged populations. We believe that the best, most effective approaches to the educational reform programs of disadvantaged populations should focus on student outcomes and the development and institution of performance incentives. Despite the undeniably low average performance levels of disadvantaged students, programs for disadvantaged students must be driven by performance, and must emphasize incentives and rewards in order to foster student outcomes. This idea is radically different from most reform programs, past and present, which pay little attention to the performance of disadvantaged students. Evidence suggests, however, that improvement is more likely to occur if policies are built on what students actually achieve, and if good performance is rewarded. By implementing performance incentives and restructuring the way existing resources are used, schools will be able to improve student performance at no additional cost by using resources more effectively.

A wide range of incentive structures that focus attention and incentives on performance, either through schooling evaluation or parental involvement, may include the following:

- Charter schools that allow a group of teachers to invent their own school with separate governance, subject to agreement about performance.
- Merit schools that provide rewards to entire schools if their performance is at a high level.
- Merit pay for teachers and principals, which provides individual rewards based on performance with students.
- Private contracting for services, which pays outside firms to manage existing public schools subject to contractual guarantees and restrictions.
- Magnet schools that provide students some choice across the offerings of a district, usually differentiated by certain specialized programs or organizational themes.
- Public school choice, that permits expanded individual choice of schools either across an individual district or across all schools in a state.
- Educational vouchers that provide funds so that students can attend their choice of public or private schools.

Since many of these incentives are largely untested, improvement on a large scale will be possible only with the development of a knowledge base about effective incentives system approaches.

Implementing Change

Teachers must be active participants in the development of improved schools. Toward this end, implementing new incentive-based approaches to school reform would involve a two-tiered system of employment contracts. New teachers would work under contracts that involve more risks, fewer guarantees, greater flexibility, and increased rewards, while current teachers would continue to work under existing employment rules for tenure, pay, and work conditions, unless they opt for the new teacher contract.

In addition to providing teachers with enhanced decisionmaking roles, state governments also need to make substantial changes in the roles they play in education by promoting and encouraging experimentation and implementation of new incentive systems. States must work to remove unproductive input regulations and certification standards, which currently form the core of most state educational programs. These should be replaced by performance standards and explicit student outcome goals.

If properly designed, performance incentives will encourage the ingenuity and effort needed to develop and implement effective programs for advantaged and disadvantaged students alike.

Local school districts must also take on new responsibilities: for curricular choices; management of teacher and administrative personnel, including hiring and firing on a performance basis; and establishing closer links with businesses (particularly for students not continuing on to post-secondary school). Although none of these roles differs markedly from current activities, a significant shift in content would occur if states removed many of their restrictions on instruction and organization. Moreover, if major decisions devolved to local schools,

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share important objectives and characteristics. They seek to direct researchers to issues of greater interest and relevance to teachers. They involve teachers in the research enterprise with hopes of developing new understanding, appreciation, and use of the findings. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they provide opportunities to link knowledge developed from both research and experience in a dialogue of inquiry and problem solving for the improvement of practice. In this dialogue, the findings of research become one of several resources that can be analyzed, dismissed, or brought to bear on the problems of practice.

Applications for Inner-City Schools

Clearly the issues discussed above will be prominent, and perhaps intensified, in the context of the inner city. Although there is little research available that tells us how these issues may manifest themselves, the complexities and concerns in inner-city contexts probably increase the demand of practicing and prospective teachers for research-based knowledge. At the same time, the conditions of inner-city education are likely increase the need for practical as opposed to theoretical knowledge. Under the stressful conditions that often accompany inner-city teaching, theory and research may become luxuries that teachers believe they cannot afford.

The complexities of inner-city schools and classrooms also may make it more difficult to apply research findings, and more difficult for inner-city teachers to perceive the relevance of research conducted in different contexts. This is a problem not only of decontextualizing findings derived from different settings, but also of recontextualizing findings for inner-city contexts. It can be highly challenging for inner-city teachers to take a general, decontextualized principle distilled from research and deduce its meaning for the complex and dynamic inner-city classrooms in which they work. Likewise, research that attempts to document and explain the complexities of inner-city classrooms, while perhaps seen as more relevant, may also be more difficult to make sense of and act upon. Thus, we may be faced with the double-edged problem of relevance with regard to general, decontextualized findings, and sense-making with regard to findings that embody the complexities of inner-city teaching.

Finally, we must consider whether the high levels of stress and the sense of crisis found in many inner-city schools make it more or less likely that new ideas from research will be entertained and acted upon. Although stress and crisis may be significant impetuses for innovation, they can also function as strong, conservative forces that serve to reinforce current knowledge and practice. At present, further research is necessary to determine the best ways to introduce new knowledge into high stress, urban contexts, and to moderate the sense of stress and crisis that currently exists in many inner-city schools. ■

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new emphasis would be placed on management and leadership, leading to the development of new capacities.

For its part, the federal government should play a primary role in developing outcome goals and standards, creating performance information, supporting broad program evaluation, and disseminating the results of evaluation. It should also continue to support supplemental programs for disadvantaged and minority students. Such programs should follow the same guidelines as above, involve expansions of earlier childhood education, integrated health and nutritional programs, and other interventions to compensate for background disadvantages.

Businesses also must take on new roles. More direct business input in schools, perhaps coupled with long-term hiring relationships, could be mutually beneficial. Moreover, if businesses insisted on high academic performance, the incentive for students to work hard in school would increase dramatically. Implementation of performance incentives would also help align businesses and schools, thereby enabling businesses, which have traditionally employed such incentives, to help in developing systems of performance incentives for school personnel. ■

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several agencies or organizations. Rarely, however, are reforms conceptualized from the perspective of the consumer, i.e., students, parents, and the public, who must be engaged if meaningful reform is to take place.

• If public attitudes are to change, schools and other public institutions must meet public expectations and forge systems of collective accountability. At present, a schism exists between public and practitioner perspectives on the global performance of U.S. schools, which is fueled by different expectations, knowledge bases, and experiences. To bridge this deep attitudinal divide and garner public support, clarity and consensus must be reached on the standards for and outcomes of public education.

• Attitudes will not change without some strategic thinking and planning and without mechanisms to frame such change. Mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation that engage both professionals and the public must be developed, and ongoing activities, diverse projects, and community gatherings that promote different perspective taking and knowledge building must be fostered in order to create understanding within and across communities.

• Public opinion is, by and large, shaped by what is read and heard in the media, which is prone to convey images of ineffective educational and social institutions. In order to counter these negative media images, alternative strategies to engage the media are needed, such as the use of media fellowships for reporters who best cover education beats, or the engagement of media moguls to serve on school boards and related committees.

• In order to prepare educators and human service professionals for the changing roles discussed above, training approaches need to be transdisciplinary so that workers with discrete skills will have knowledge and understanding of other fields and disciplines. Objectives for training must also be reconstituted so that change will be regarded as the norm, and adaptation and flexibility will be seen as the new goals. In addition, new learnings must be infused into training so that collaborative problem solving and group consensus building are part of the knowledge repertoire of service professionals. In short, we need to pay closer attention to the learnings of those joining and those already in the education and social service professions if we expect them to deal with the challenges posed by children and their families in the 21st century. ▣

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